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Judge David R. Herndon
Chief Judge
US District Court Southern District of Illinois
750 Missouri Avenue
East Saint Louis, IL 62201

Dear Judge Herndon:

Thank you for your invitation to attend the Centennial Celebration of the Melvin Price United States Courthouse in East St. Louis Illinois on October 30, 2009. Regretfully, my schedule will not allow me to attend.

I would like to extend my greetings to all the participants of this celebration. The centennial celebration marks a century of distinguished service and the highest commitment to justice as carried out by the members of the US District Court Southern District of Illinois.

It is a pleasure to imagine the scene of the dedication 100 years ago. President William H. Taft, Vice President James Sherman, our home state Representative and Speaker of the House Joseph Cannon, as well as the Governors of Illinois and 32 other states, 137 members of the House, 20 Senators, foreign statesmen and other notable dignitaries and a crowd of 30,000 citizens were in attendance. What a grand celebration it must have been, with parades, speeches, receptions and fireworks.

From its first Judge Francis Marion Wright to its present Chief Judge David Herndon, the Courthouse has seen a multitude of outstanding public servants over its 100 year history. I would like to offer my gratitude to all who have made this commitment to serve and my best wishes for a successful commemoration of this historic event.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

RJD/sb